

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

May 29, 2007

**PUBLIC ASSISTANCE FRAUD**

Public assistance fraud is a tragic by-product of well-intentioned programs to support County residents on their road to self-sufficiency. The County Department of Public Social Services, in collaboration with the Offices of the District Attorney and Auditor-Controller, maintains a strong fraud identification, prevention and investigation program. In 2006, DPSS investigated over 39,000 fraud referrals saving \$55 million dollars in valuable taxpayer dollars. Additionally, on March 21, 2006 the Board approved a motion to develop an interagency Data Warehouse, which DPSS will begin implementing in July 2007 to help prevent future fraud from occurring by accessing automated welfare, child care and housing data during the actual benefit application process.

Yet there are a number of public assistance avenues through which the same family may receive benefits, and the potential for fraud may lie, in part, in the fact that not all public assistance programs are investigated by the same agencies. The State investigates fraud in the County-administered Medi-Cal and In-Home Supportive Services programs. The County investigates fraud in the County-administered child care, welfare and food stamp programs. Often, the County agencies that administer public assistance programs to the same family do not have adequate awareness about each other's program. One example is in child care programs administered through the Departments of Public Social Services (DPSS) and Children and Family Services (DCFS).

**M O R E****MOTION**

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Burke	_____
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Antonovich	_____
Yaroslavsky	_____

There are over 4000 children under DCFS supervision, who are in the homes of their birth parents or placed with relatives, and who receive \$13 million dollars in child care subsidies from the State annually. Although County efforts are well-underway to address fraud in Stage 1 child care for welfare families, more collaborative eligibility determinations for the child care programs that DPSS and DCFS administer respectively might maximize the use of child care dollars and potentially limit fraud. In fact, improved interagency collaboration in all County-administered public assistance programs may yield additional methods to detect and prevent fraud, which is robbing valuable taxpayer dollars that fund vital services for deserving constituents in Los Angeles County.

**I, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors direct the Chief Administrative Officer to report back in 30 days on the feasibility of:

1. Incorporating data mining technology into the DPSS Data Warehouse to target fraud in all public assistance programs; and
2. Providing fraud detection and prevention training to all county agency staff who administer public assistance programs, ensuring that county agency staff are aware of and know how to access the resources available to report suspected fraud, such as WeTip, the Auditor-Controller's Fraud Hot Line and DPSS' Central Fraud Reporting Line.

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